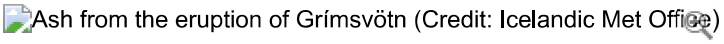
Ash plume overview

24 May



The British Geological Survey (BGS) have described the eruption of Grímsvötn that began over the weekend as a 'significant eruption' and the Icelandic Met Office (IMO) have reported ash continuing to be ejected from the volcano.

As the Volcanic Ash Advisory Centre for the northwest Europe region, the Met Office is receiving information about the eruption from colleagues in the IMO and BGS. We use this to provide guidance on the movement of the ash plume.

The movement of the ash plume will depend on how long the volcano continues to erupt and how weather patterns develop. The Met Office London Volcanic Ash Advisory Centre (VAAC) continues to provide forecast guidance up to 24 hours ahead to support decision-making. This guidance is provided to the Civil Aviation Authority as the lead agency, NATS, airports and airline operators in order to support their decisions on whether aircraft can fly safely.

Ash reports today across northern Scotland confirm Met Office ash forecasts issued on Monday. The ash is predicted to clear northern parts of the UK by early Wednesday. How this affects flight routing decisions would be determined by CAA and NATS together with the individual airlines.

Latest observations include:

- Satellite and Lidar observations confirm the presence of ash over northern Britain in the last 24 hours.
- A plane flying from Aberdeen to the Shetlands encountered volcanic ash during the flight with ash being deposited on the aircraft.
- This morning ash deposits were found on a plane that had be flying in the Orkney area.
- A plane flying from Stansted to Belfast observed a layer of ash to the north /northwest of the flight path.
- A plane flying at a height of 18,000 feet in the Manchester area around 2pm today has observed a layer of ash of approximately 1000-2000 feet thick.
- The research ship Discovery entered an area of thick volcanic ash on Monday between Scotland and Iceland with ash being deposited onboard.
- Professional observers have reported ash being deposited in northern Britain.
- Ash has been deposited on vehicles on Orkney.
- Air quality sensors across Scotland have indicated an increased amount of ash particles (PM10s) during today - more available from the **Defra** website.

Met Office forecasts for the end of this week indicate mainly low levels of ash affecting parts of UK and Europe. This forecast does depend on the status of the Volcano since the wind direction and strength will remain variable. You should stay up to date with the latest advice from the Met Office. How this affects flight routing decisions would be determined by CAA and NATS together with the individual airlines.

Last updated: 26 May 2011